



Review of the Use of Single-Window Service Delivery
Models to Support the Development of the
Secondary Wood Manufacturing Sector

Final Report

March 2000

FORUM Consulting Group
Victoria, BC



**Forest
Enterprises
Branch**

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Section 1.0: Introduction..... | 1 |
| 1.1 Terms of Reference | 2 |
| 1.2 Report Outline | 2 |
| Section 2.0: Other Jurisdictions | 3 |
| 2.1 Alabama's Forestry Team..... | 3 |
| 2.2 Georgia..... | 6 |
| 2.3 Forward Wisconsin | 7 |
| 2.4 Best Practices and Lessons Learned..... | 8 |
| Section 3.0: BC Initiatives | 11 |
| 3.1 Introduction | 11 |
| 3.2 Traditional Leading Agencies | 11 |
| 3.3 Recent Initiatives..... | 12 |
| 3.4 Summary | 13 |
| Section 4.0: Issues for Consideration..... | 14 |
| 4.1 Introduction | 14 |
| 4.2 Lead Agency | 14 |
| 4.3 Structure - Informal or Formal Approach?..... | 15 |
| 4.4 Assigned Functions | 16 |
| 4.5 Resourcing..... | 16 |
| 4.6 Linkages and Partnerships..... | 17 |
| Section 5.0: Options and Conclusions | 18 |
| 5.1 Options | 18 |
| 5.2 Conclusions | 19 |
| Introduction..... | 21 |
| Rationale..... | 21 |
| Characteristics of Single Window Models | 21 |
| Variables Affecting the Choice of Single-Window Models | 23 |
| Appendix 1: Single Window Service Delivery | |
| Appendix 2: Best Practices | |
| Appendix 3: Assessing Program Delivery Alternatives | |

Section 1.0: Introduction

Single window approaches to service delivery (commonly referred to as one-stop shopping) are used to promote service improvement by coordinating and integrating the delivery of services to customers or clients. Their central feature is the bringing together of services, or information about them, to reduce the amount of time and effort clients must expend to find and obtain the services they need.¹ In this sense, single-window approaches adopt a "client lens" or perspective to improving the processes that link clients to agencies and organizations. The rationale for implementing such service delivery models is that they not only improve client service and satisfaction but reduce service delivery costs and, in the case of models designed for businesses, enhance the climate for investment.

Although the ultimate aim of single-window approaches is better client service, the actual benefits realized by the agency delivering services and the service recipients vary. From the perspective of the service deliverer, single window approaches can be used to:

- maintain or improve the quality of service delivery with fewer resources;
- ensure that programs and services do not conflict with each other;
- develop better client feedback mechanisms; and
- improve the effectiveness of particular policies and programs.

From the perspective of the users of services or programs, single-window approaches have great potential to:

- Reduce confusion over availability of services;
- Provide seamless delivery of services (weaving together services delivered from different jurisdictional levels);
- Improve access to services and information;
- Improve the level of support they receive; and
- Improve the ability to communicate their needs to government.

The aim of this report is to examine existing single-window models used to promote secondary wood manufacturing in other jurisdictions in order to assess the appropriateness of implementing similar approaches in BC. Jurisdictions include Alabama, Georgia and Wisconsin.

¹Stephen Bent, Kenneth Kernaghan, and D. Brian Marson (March 1999), *Innovations and Good Practices in Single-Window Service*, (Citizen-Centred Service Network - Canadian Centre for Management Development, p. 2.

A previous multi-jurisdictional review of policies used to promote secondary wood manufacturing identified several functions were being performed by single-window models for service delivery:

- Improved access to information;
- Improved access and delivery of existing services;
- Feedback to government on client needs;
- Marketing - to attract additional investment; and
- Supporting the marketing efforts of secondary wood manufacturers.

The single-window approach to delivering services has been viewed as attractive in British Columbia since it requires little change to the type of services delivered but instead focuses on improving the process of delivering services to clients. It is viewed as a potential low-cost solution to real problems being faced by investors and small to medium-sized businesses.

1.1 Terms of Reference

We were requested to examine selected one-stop access models used to promote investment in selected jurisdictions; describe the structure and functions of one-stop access models; review their recent history in BC; identify lessons from the experience in other jurisdictions; and identify guidelines and options for BC implementation.

1.2 Report Outline

Chapter 2 provides an overview of three single-window models that have been implemented to support secondary wood manufacturing in other jurisdictions. In Chapter 3 we have provided an overview of BC's recent experience with single window access. Chapter 4 summarizes the key findings and also describes the "best practices" indicated from our examination of other jurisdictions. Appendix 1 describes the salient characteristics of different types of single window model and the key variables that govern choices between them. Appendix 2 provides a longer series of best practices identified in other studies of single window service delivery models. Appendix 3 presents criteria for assessing single window delivery models.

Section 2.0: Other Jurisdictions

The examination of single window approaches was restricted to a small number of focused case studies which illustrate how a single-window approach has been used to promote forestry-related business development. The case studies include:

- Alabama Forestry Team;
- Georgia;
- Forward Wisconsin.

An overview of the single-window model used in each of these jurisdictions is presented below.

2.1 Alabama's Forestry Team

The Alabama Forestry Team ("TEAM") was established in the late 1980's. It operates as an informal, interagency body coordinating service delivery to forestry businesses interested in moving to Alabama, relocating within the state or expanding.

The TEAM was established because there was a lack of focus on the forestry industry. Alabama had taken the industry for granted, and although the industry was healthy and a major economic driver already, it was felt that additional focus would be of benefit. Those who were working closely with the data knew that a more focused picture had to be developed and that agencies had to work more closely together. In 1992 the Alabama Development Office (ADO) and the Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC) formalized the arrangement.

2.1.1 Partnering Agencies

The Alabama Development Office acts as the lead agency. Businesses typically first contact the ADO. From that point, forestry-related businesses are referred to the TEAM. TEAM is not a legal entity and is more of an ad hoc body that comes together as needed.

The TEAM can call on members from twelve agencies, with four core agencies having the greatest degree of involvement. The core agencies are:

- The Forestry Commission (stumpage information, resource information, some economic analysis);
- Alabama Development Office (tax incentives, funding programs etc.);
- The International Trade Centre; and
- The Forest Product Development Centre.

Other agencies with a lesser but still significant level of involvement include:

- the Alabama Power Company (private sector);
- the Electric Cooperative (private sector);
- Alabama Department of Environmental Management;

- Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (they also have an energy arm which is accessed for wood waste related incentives); and
- The University of Alabama (Safe State) is also accessed to deal with occupational safety issues.

2.1.2 Roles, Responsibilities & Organizational Structure

Each of the TEAM members provides services as needed. The level of support and cooperation between agencies has been high, attributed to the fact that all agencies have a tacit responsibility for economic development. The objective is to provide a full picture of the regulatory requirements, economic considerations and available incentives. The TEAM will walk the client through the process and provides formal written submissions on the key factors to be considered in the decision to invest.

The TEAM acts as the technical arm of broader development efforts by the ADO. In the opinion of TEAM staff, the technical support to clients has boosted Alabama's reputations as a place that wants to do business. Similarly, the TEAM enables clients to get information quickly. This means that in any preliminary scan of jurisdictions, a client is much more likely to take a second look at Alabama. Again, it boosts the image of Alabama as a place that wants to do business.

As the TEAM continues to network with other agencies and communities, they have increasingly become the first point of contact.

Clients are restricted to forestry firms. Both small and big business opportunities are treated equally but the recent emphasis has been on the promotion of secondary wood manufacturing. On request, the ADO keeps client information confidential and requests that TEAM members provide information without discussing the name of the client.

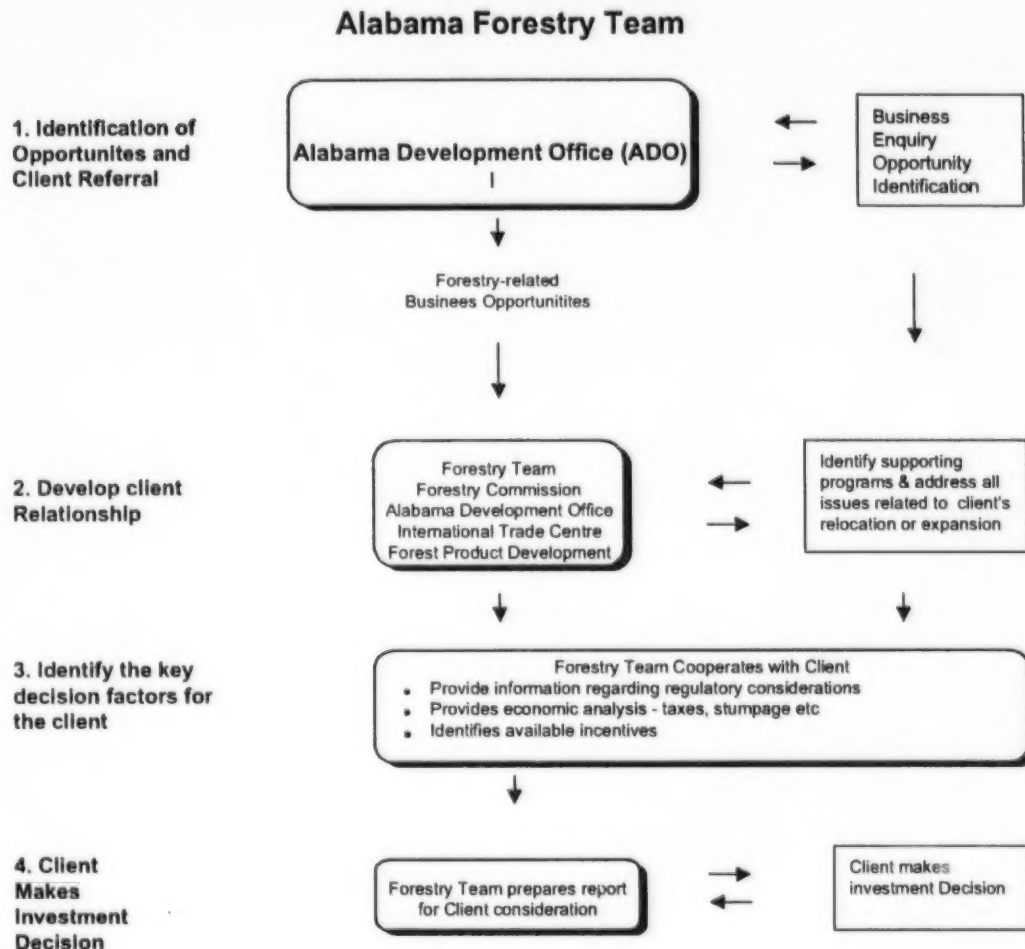
2.1.3 Issues Encountered

The TEAM has not been able to undertake marketing efforts on any significant scale. At present, TEAM members lack the resources to attend trade shows and participate in trade delegations to the degree that they feel is required. The TEAM is in the process of applying for federal funding (rural development program) to strengthen its marketing capacity.

Accountability structures are considered to be weaker than ideal and this has been recognized as a concern. Given the small level of funding and the fact that most members of the TEAM have other full-time responsibilities, the demands for accountability have not been great. (Overall, Alabama has placed less emphasis on performance-based measurement and accountability frameworks than have some other states in the US.)

Annual reports were provided for a time but these have ceased. (The TEAM may return to annual reporting in the future however.) The primary mechanism by which accountability has been demonstrated is now through announcements of expansions, relocation and investments through news releases.

The following contains a schematic of the Alabama model.



2.1.4 Benefits

Some of the benefits of the TEAM approach include:

- Government agencies account for each others interests and needs;
- The client gets a more coherent picture;
- The client is left with the Impression that "Alabama wants to do business"

The ADO takes the view that the Forestry Team is a necessary component of Alabama's economic development efforts. At the same time the ADO is quick to note that ADO is not sufficient in and of itself - as such it is difficult to identify impacts that can be directly attributed to the TEAM efforts.

2.2 Georgia

2.2.1 Environmental Permitting

One-stop environmental permitting is facilitated through the Environmental Protection Division of the Georgia Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism. The agency is also approved by the US EPA to issue federally required permits. With permitting authority vested in one agency, the state of Georgia believes that many industries are saving months by comparison with states, which do not have a one-stop approach.²

2.2.2 Georgia Forest Commission

The Forest Products Department of the Georgia Forest Commission (GFC) has an economic development function and provides technical assistance to the state's forest products industries. The primary objectives of the department include:

- efficient utilization of wood in an environmentally sound manner;
- expanding markets for Georgia's wood products;
- promoting the development and use of new wood products; and
- expansion of existing industries.³

Through a Utilization and Marketing Department, the GFC also provides a variety of one-stop shopping including:

- Fibre availability through timber products output reports, residue reports and forest inventory analysis reports;
- Domestic and international industry leads/contacts;
- Technical marketing assistance;
- Technical utilization assistance;
- Assistance in location/relocation of industrial development sites;
- Information on wood recycling and energy; and
- Industrial/residential wood systems information.

A "Rural Economic Development Program" is included among the Department's programs. The program promotes forest-based economic development for the benefit of local communities and is cost-shared from state and US Forest Service budgets. The program assists "communities in planning and developing viable enterprises, and related job creation opportunities utilizing forest resources and waste products from existing manufacturing operations.

The program attempts to pursue opportunities which promote healthy, sustainable environments and sustainable communities.⁴

² <http://www.georgia.org/itt/recruitment/srvbus.html>

³ <http://gfc.state.ga.us/ie/info/services.html>

⁴ <http://www.gfc.state.ga.us/utilization/index.html>

2.3 Forward Wisconsin

In 1984 Forward Wisconsin, Inc. was created on the recommendation of a state appointed task force. It is a public-private marketing organization charged with marketing outside Wisconsin to attract new businesses, jobs and increase economic activity in Wisconsin.

2.3.1 Partnering Agencies

Like Alabama, the Wisconsin economic development team includes a range of partners - including the Wisconsin Department of Commerce, other state agencies, local economic development officials, the state's utilities, the Wisconsin Technical College and University Systems, and other groups.

Forward Wisconsin's Board of Directors reflects that level of involvement from both the private and the public sector. Private sector representation includes Wisconsin's utilities, banks, educational institutions, investment firms, law firms, and manufacturers. Public sector representation includes four state legislators and the Secretary of the Department of Commerce. The state governor chairs the Board.

2.3.2 Funding

Forward Wisconsin is a not-for-profit corporation with an annual budget of approximately \$1 million. Almost two-thirds of that funding is provided by private sector contributors, with the balance coming from the state through contract with the Department of Commerce.

2.3.3 Marketing Strategy

Forward Wisconsin provides site and community information, business cost comparisons, financial information and a variety of other services to prospective businesses. It provides information on financial assistance and incentives and also acts as a referral agent for businesses so that they can more easily identify and contact appropriate government agencies.

Forward Wisconsin works to boost the state's image, to project the state's positive business climate and to attract industry to Wisconsin. The corporation's marketing plan focuses its resources on ten target industries identified as compatible with the state's strengths and resources and projected to have strong growth potential:

- Administrative Centers
- Biotechnology
- Food Processing
- Forest Products
- Insurance
- Medical technology / Instrumentation
- Metal Fabrication
- Plastics
- Printing / Publishing
- Warehousing / Distribution

2.3.4 Marketing Activities

Forward Wisconsin uses a wide range of economic development marketing tools including:

- Direct mail campaigns and follow-up telemarketing to targeted industries and geographic areas;
- Out-of-state prospecting trips and trade show booth appearances at targeted industry expositions (In 1998, for example, delegates attended the Woodworking Machinery & Furniture Supply Fair (IWF '98) and as a result of their efforts some 30 leads were generated.);
- Print advertising campaigns directed in geographically targeted publications and target industry journals;
- Image-building campaigns;
- Special event promotion; and
- Informing site selection consultants about Wisconsin.

2.3.5 Benefits

- Forward Wisconsin gains its primary strength from its unique status as a public-private partnership, its ability to draw upon the resources of both the public and private sectors, and its capacity to coordinate these efforts. The public-private partnership has given businesses in the private sector an opportunity to link with the public sector on economic development and growth issues. This two-way flow of information has been identified as a key to the success of the organization and a means to ensure that it remains responsive to changing conditions and the needs of the state.
- Since its inception, Forward Wisconsin has been involved in over 230 business expansion projects (this estimate includes all sectors in addition to forestry) which in turn have initially supported some 9,000 jobs.⁵

2.4 Best Practices and Lessons Learned

The single window initiatives profiles in this section reveal several best practices and lessons which can help to guide implementation efforts in BC.

"Turf Tension" is often identified as a key barrier to success for single-window initiatives. Often this problem is associated with initiatives which affect inter-governmental administrative relations. In situations where turf tension exists it is important that each partnering agency have a high level of commitment to the initiative. The experience of the Alabama Forestry Team shows that initial less formal arrangements or smaller, incremental steps have been found to build trust and reduce turf tension in the longer -term. At the same time the TEAM approach actively managed turf tension by developing strong communication links with agencies who have a stake in economic development and by ensuring that each agency involved realizes a benefit from cooperating.

Flexibility is required so that the model can adapt to cyclical changes in the industry and respond to new market demands. Resource requirements and demands on staff time would be expected to fluctuate in sympathy with broader economic cycles.

⁵ http://www.forwardwi.com/news/press10_12.html

Gaining and maintaining political support: A high level "Champion" of the initiative will help to ensure success. At the same time, if the initiative integrates services from several different agencies, the champion can inhibit success if they provoke turf struggles.

Lead and collaborate: Support for an initiative at all levels in participating agencies is important. Leadership at all levels is needed both for initiating single windows and for fostering the teamwork and horizontal linkages critical to minimizing turf battles and maximizing synergies. The forestry team approach found in the US emerged from the lower levels of participating agencies. Later they gained the necessary support at the higher levels of each agency.

Partner Strategically: The objectives and power of partners must be roughly equal to ensure success. Partners must also ensure that their objectives are mutually compatible, that they communicate clearly and constantly with one another, that they reconcile differences in their human resource policies, that they make sure that all partners receive an appropriate measure of visibility, and that they build in an allowance for flexibility. The Alabama Forestry Team is effective in part because each agency is able to work more effectively than it could independently.

Leadership: The Alabama Forestry Team consists of state employees with a long history of working together and see department-specific mandates being pursued more effectively through the TEAM approach. This commitment and "fit" with existing mandates ensures that the informal TEAM approach continues to work effectively. Forward Wisconsin reports directly to the State Governor. As a consequence, its high profile in conjunction with its formal structure ensure that incentives are sufficient to ensure follow through.

Credibility with industry: The model cannot work unless it has gained the trust of industry and has credibility with them. This means the existing business community must play an important role in the endeavour. The forestry team approach is predicated on the proposition that the forest products industry needs can be best addressed by forest products professionals. As such, forestry agencies which already have an economic development and wood products focus are the logical "lead agencies" in the team. In the case of the Alabama Forestry Team, the leader works with the Alabama Development Office but is a professional forester. A conscious decision was made in the Alabama case to ensure that forestry professionals were in charge of addressing enquiries and concerns of forest products industries.

Responsiveness: the model needs to be responsive to ensure that investor enquiries and issues are dealt with in a timely fashion. The Alabama Forestry Team was able to identify significant forestry-related investments that were eventually made simply because they caused investors to take a second look. Furthermore, the commitment of the TEAM to take ownership of client information requests even when the information is held by other agencies, has helped them to maintain a high level of credibility with their clients and to ensure that information needs are met in a timely fashion.

Treat both your "internal" and "external" clients well to ensure that clients do not get referred to other agencies. The Alabama Forestry Team takes a "buck stops here" approach. If they cannot answer a question the team does the legwork then reports back

to the client. They do not refer clients to other agencies. The Forestry Team felt that this single point of contact strengthened client relationships and made it easier to provide potential investors with a comprehensive view of a potential investment opportunity.

Section 3.0: BC Initiatives

3.1 Introduction

Over the past 20 years BC has experimented with a number of initiatives designed to promote investment and business development through a single-window approach. Overall the projects experienced mixed results.

Four central themes have characterized the development of the BC single window approaches:

- Small business development;
- Regional and community development;
- International marketing; and,
- Opportunity identification and assessment.

3.2 Traditional Leading Agencies

For the most part two ministries have been the principal vehicles for the BC initiatives:

- The Ministry of Employment and Investment; and,
- Ministry of Small Business Tourism and Culture.

In the last few years the regional and community development function has become diffused over a number of other Ministries. The dispersal of responsibility arose concurrently with a shift in the regional focus away from economic development planning towards land use and zoning and other community level sustainability efforts.

International marketing remains a primary focus for the Ministry of Employment and Investment (MEI). In the early 1990's the Ministry adopted a significant shift towards client focused service delivery building on existing one stop centres and identifying itself as a "deal-maker and deal-seeker."⁶ The client focus has shifted as the Ministry's resources have been consumed by strategic planning initiatives that have drawn resources away from economic development towards sustainability planning.

The other principal one-stop program delivery vehicle, the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture continues to be a lead for small business initiatives, but it also lacks a focus on forest industries.

Neither Ministry has exhibited a strong forestry perspective in their recent initiatives. The trend away from interest in promoting forestry may have arisen as a result of a desire to increase the diversification of the BC economy and move away from the primary sector. This has resulted in greater effort being placed on enhancing the development of high-tech industries.

⁶ Ministry of Employment and Investment (1991), *Ministry of Employment and Investment - 1990/91 Annual Report*.

3.3 Recent Initiatives

Although BC has made significant efforts to foster a "seamless approach" to service delivery and to spark investment, recent provincial initiatives have concluded that more needs to be done.

The need for a single-window approach to service delivery was identified often during the Premier's Economic Summit on Economic Opportunity in 1998. Delegates identified many barriers to investment and job creation that the single-window approach could help mitigate. These included:⁷

- easing red tape by improving approval processes, etc.;
- improving responsiveness to business needs;
- reducing the effort required by businesses to get the full regulatory, policy and program picture from governments; and
- acquisition of professional skills (marketing, R&D etc.).

A critical theme found in many of the discussions was that small and medium-sized businesses lack the resources to effectively overcome many of the barriers that are typically encountered from start up through operation and expansion. Although these barriers are significant enough for larger business, for the small business, they can be debilitating.

One-stop shopping was a key theme that the Business Task Force examined to improve the business climate and the government/business interface. The Task Force identified the need for more coordinated business access to government and interaction with government as one of its highest priorities. They identified the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture as the lead government agency for this area and recommended that the Ministry proceed as quickly as possible with initiatives to meet these needs.⁸

The provincial government, in partnership with the federal government, has taken an initial step through the One-Stop Business Registration program, currently available in six locations. The program allows one stop registration for several different federal and provincial programs for new businesses. The service will be expanded to several additional locations over the next few months. In addition, the Ministry is developing a strategy to provide one stopping shopping and support to a broader set of government/business interactions under the name "BC Business Connects."

BC Business Connects is the centre-piece of BC's one-stop initiative for business. Led by the Ministry, of Small Business Tourism and Culture, the initiative is multifaceted and includes:

- the use of the federal business number as a common identifier for all Provincial Government purposes,
- one stop business registration available at about 30 regional sites, and
- expansion of the regional Canada/BC Business Service Centres to 30 sites.

⁷ For a more detailed list of issues, opportunities and action items that are most relevant to the single-window approach to service delivery, refer to Appendix 1.

⁸ Business Task Force (October 23 1998), *Business Task Force Streamlining Initiative (Second Report)*

The Business Task Force continues to support the BC Business Connects Initiative.

3.4 Summary

With regard to forestry investment, a brief overview of BC's experience with single-window delivery reveals several issues associated with business development.

- BC's focus has been on developing new formal agencies to develop the single window rather than through delegation or the development of partnerships.
- Initiatives have often led to the development of formal structures.
- Resource constraints have tended to reduce the potential positive impacts of single window approaches.
- Single window approaches have not included a specialization in forest industries.
- At present there is no actual lead "development agency" charged with promoting forest industry investment and development.
- The focus in BC's efforts to stimulate investment have been regulatory streamlining.
- The Premier's Summit and the Business Task Force identified the single-window approach as a solution for small-business in general.

As we can see from the previous section, formal linkages are not necessarily the most effective mechanism for achieving investment objectives. The less formal open process has been able to achieve positive and interesting results.

Section 4.0: Issues for Consideration

4.1 Introduction

The reason for examining single window approaches in BC and elsewhere was to identify models that could be expected to improve linkages between government agencies and potential investors, be more responsive to the forest sector, overcome traditional barriers to service coordination and integration in BC and ultimately promote investment.

In this regard, the discussion is focused around five themes:

- The lead agency ;
- The structure or degree of formality surrounding the team and reporting relationships;
- Assigned functions;
- Resources; and
- The linkages and partnerships that need to be developed between agencies to support the model.

These factors are discussed below.

4.2 Lead Agency

Several considerations affect the decision on who the lead agency is including:

- which agency traditionally served the client group or businesses that would be served by the envisioned agency. This is related to the scope of the agency.
- Who has the trust and credibility with the client group
- The number of existing agencies that the SW approach affects and the degree of formality around the SW structure. This is also related to the degree that the SW approach represents a departure in the way that services are provided in BC.
- The resourcing demands (budget and staffing) imposed by the envisioned structure. As resourcing demands increase so do the demands for leadership and champions at the higher levels of government.

In the case of Alabama and Georgia, the single window models emerged from within existing forestry agencies. These forestry agencies historically had a responsibility for providing information and forest product-related advice to businesses. The services were later augmented with a more direct economic development function, which then led to efforts to coordinate agency activities that were affecting forest agency clients. The forestry agencies assumed the leadership role simply over time and they maintained that role because they remained the most credible lead having the support of both their clients and government.

In BC, the economic development function is shared among many agencies including the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture; Forest Renewal BC; the Ministry of

Agriculture and Food; the Ministry of Employment and Investment; Fisheries Renewal BC; the Ministry of Community Development, Cooperatives and Volunteers; the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources and the Ministry of Forests. Traditionally, MEI has assumed a leadership role in promoting economic development and has at various times supported a forestry unit that was charged specifically with promoting investment in the forest sector. Given the low level of interest and support in promoting forest-related investment in MEI at present, the BC environment lacks a leader.

4.3 Structure - Informal or Formal Approach?

As the Alabama Forest Team demonstrates, the level of commitment and the existing informal networks between agencies are probably more important in ensuring effectiveness than any other single factor. At the same time the informal nature of the Alabama Forestry Team appears to have made it harder to gain resource support for the initiative. Among clients there is a low level of recognition of a "Team" at work. Instead clients tend to focus more on the individuals involved and the reputation that they have gained for "getting things done". In this sense, the Team feels that among its clients it has a reputation for streamlining without adding a layer of bureaucracy and that resources are not wasted on administration and promotion of the agency. The longevity of the Team is dependent therefore less on resource commitments that have been made and more on the partnerships and networks that have been forged.

Accountability challenges have also been associated with the informal approach. In some respects the level of accountability that the Team demonstrates collectively is reduced by the informal structure. There is no Team business plan, formal strategy or formal performance measures. The ADO is ultimately responsible for the economic development function in Alabama. However, each of the other members of the Team are accountable to their host agencies. In this regard, accountability in the informal agency is promoted by ensuring that there is a strong link between the work of the Team and the mandate of the participating agency. Each participant has to be convinced that they will be pursuing their agencies goals and objectives more effectively by participating on the Team than they would by not participating.

The degree to which a formal structure is required appears to be related to:

- the degree of political will and political leadership associated with the initiative. There is a high degree of political will and leadership evident in the Alabama Forestry Team approach which has caused all agencies involved to pull together.) With a high degree of political will, there is less need for a formal organizational structure.
- the demand for performance-based management systems and for public officials to demonstrate accountability for results. The greater the demand, the more formalized the organization will need to be.

Finally, the nature of the structure will also depend upon the resource support that agencies and governments are willing to commit (formal structure are typically more costly), the anticipated longevity of the initiative, and the degree to which the demand for the service is expected to fluctuate. Less formal structures would find it easier to respond to cyclical demands and adapt more easily to evolving needs and issues.

4.4 Assigned Functions

The single-window agencies have examined in this study have performed several functions and include:

- Marketing and opportunity identification.
- Provision of information required to assess an opportunity, including the regulatory, tax, incentive and other information required to assess the opportunity.
- Assistance with application and approval processes, including assistance or monitoring of the application and approval processes.⁹
- Ongoing service requirements, such as information about labour programs, other business incentives or changing rules and regulations.
- Help in promoting trade with other jurisdictions.

The functions performed by the single-window agency will vary depending on circumstances. Some considerations in identifying which functions should be adopted are noted below:

- whether there is a demand to make improvements in the delivery of services.
- whether or not such services are already provided through another agency
- the level of satisfaction with services that are performed by other agencies
- the degree to which agencies are willing to cooperate or delegate the performance of those functions to a single window agencies (turf tension could make the implementation of a particular SW approach difficult or unfeasible).
- the degree to which the provision of these services through the SW model can be resourced.

At the same time the structure, linkages and relationships with other agencies will be dictated somewhat by the decision over which functions are adopted.

4.5 Resourcing

The most important consideration in resourcing is to ensure that the planned level of activity and the objectives of the SW initiative can be reasonably achieved with the level of resourcing provided.

The level of resourcing associated with each model will limit the scope of the single-window agency. Forward Wisconsin is able to undertake activities that are simply beyond the scope of the Alabama Forestry Team because of additional resources. The Wisconsin group attends trade shows throughout the US and abroad in order to attract businesses and investment in strategic sectors. Forward Wisconsin has a formal infrastructure, is very active and has a high profile. The broad mandate (a focus on ten strategic sectors) has also allowed the Wisconsin model to leverage its resources to promote investment in many areas.

⁹ The Ministry of Small Business Tourism and Culture's BC Business Connects is an example of a single-window delivery system at this point in the business development process. The One Stop Business Registration Plus system, for example, allows a new business to submit all required business application forms through a single location.

4.6 Linkages and Partnerships

The degree of involvement from each of the agencies that have an impact on the clients to be served, the nature of the organizational structure that houses the functions and the number of functions taken on all have an impact on the complexity of the partnership that needs to be forged to support the single-window service. In this regard, the scope of the single window approach will be limited to what can be feasibly accomplished within the context of the partnerships and linkages that are secured.

The Alabama Forestry Team grew within an existing institutional framework and faced few challenges from existing agencies. The strength of the Alabama Forestry Team is that it has the support of many agencies within and external to the state government. Although, funding is not provided by these agencies, close cooperation with private sector economic development agencies, the private utility companies and community development agencies is evident. Over the years the Team has continued to build support and has woven a strong web of support effective in linking the many agencies involved in promoting forestry related investment in some way or another.

In comparison, BC has had a more difficult time developing these linkages. In part this may be due to the BC's past preference for single agency approaches to development and the relatively frequent adjustment that has taken place with respect to organizational reform.

Section 5.0: Options and Conclusions

5.1 Options

Organizational change is dependent upon identifying an opportunity and acting appropriately in response to it. With respect to developing a single-window model to meet the needs of existing and potential secondary wood manufacturers, there appears to be both a need and a base upon which to build the mechanism. The Business Task Force and the Premier's Economic Summit have each identified the need to adopt single-window approaches. (To date the single-window approach has been limited to one-stop business registration.)

Preliminary options for consideration could include:¹⁰

1. Development of forestry expertise within agencies that have a stake in promoting forestry investment. This model is intended to improve the level of forest industry-related expertise in each agency that has a significant impact on forest industry-related investment.
2. Development of a formal body that serves the BCTIO. In this model, staff resources would be dedicated and a formal body reporting to the BCTIO would be formed. Staff would represent the core agencies affecting the forest-related investment.
3. Development of an informal team that serves the BCTIO. In this model core agencies would contribute staff expertise as needed to provide team services.
4. Development of a formal team that serves the MOF and supports BCTIO. Similar to option two, dedicated staff would represent the core agencies affecting the forest-related investment.
5. Development of an informal team that serves the MOF and supports the BCTIO. In this model core agencies would each contribute staff expertise as needed to provide team services.

In the limited review of other jurisdictions, the single-window approach has benefited most from having a clear "lead agency" which would be the logical contact point for businesses and interested investors. The environment in BC is best characterized as fractured with respect to the responsibility for promoting forest industry development.

¹⁰ We have not considered the Internet based, information provision model. Its greatest drawbacks are the challenges it poses with respect to developing client relationships - viewed as essential by many of the proactive single-window approaches. Although, the Internet approach may make it easier to get some information it is ultimately just a step in developing the strong relations needed to nurture trust and stronger investor confidence in the province.

Consequently, a more limited and focused single-window approach may have the greatest likelihood of success in the short-term. A limited sectoral focus (i.e., forestry) would have several benefits given the complex, crosscutting nature of development roles and responsibilities in BC.

- It is easier to identify an appropriate lead agency. The Ministry of Forests, for example, would be the most logical lead agency if the scope of the single-window model was limited to wood products manufacturers or even more limited to secondary wood manufacturers.
- The capacity to implement the model would be more dependent upon the willingness and resources of the MOF and the need to build partnerships with other agencies (and negotiate arrangements to delegate certain functions performed by those organizations) would be stronger.
- As noted in the discussion of the Alabama Forestry Team, initial resourcing requirements were small and the TEAM operated on an informal basis. The Alabama Forestry Commission was the driver behind the initiative and credited its success with the fact that it was recognized as a needed service and it did not infringe on other agency roles and responsibilities. In fact, the pro-active nature of the service allowed other agencies to act more effectively and reduce conflict among themselves.
- The more limited sectoral focus could also serve as a valuable pilot project that tests assumptions and the appetite for single-window approaches to promoting development in the province. More importantly, the partnerships and linkages required to support a smaller sectoral are likely to be more readily secured.

Significant improvements may be realized by developing a forestry team that links BCTIO, other community and economic development bodies and the forest sector. The opportunity exists to support both current initiatives and the forest sector by providing such a linking mechanism.

Additional research and analysis would be needed to further assess each option. In particular, the scope of the single-window model would need to be further specified and formal assessment criteria identified.

5.2 Conclusions

This report provides an overview of the single window approach to service delivery, how it has been used in BC and several other jurisdictions to promote forest industry-related investments, and the discussion contains a number of considerations and options for implementing a single-window approach in BC to improve services to forest products manufacturers that are considering expanding, locating or relocating in BC. Best practices were identified and lessons learned in order to support efforts to develop single-window approaches and several models were proposed for discussion purposes.

The steps required to move from this overview of single-window models and considerations for selecting one that is appropriate to BC include:

- Identifying single window options that meet client needs;
- Assessing options to determine if they meet government needs (generic criteria have been included in Appendix 3);
- Assessing the feasibility of implementing options;
- Selection of the best option; and
- Implementing the decision.

* * * *

Appendix 1: Single Window Service Delivery

Introduction

Single-window solutions vary according to the needs of the clients, services, resource availability, the institutional base available to build upon, the level of commitment to the initiative and the degree of cooperation from government agencies, clients and stakeholders. This overview outlines:

- The rationale for the single-window approach;
- The various functions, structures and linkages that characterize single-window models; and
- Factors that affect the choice of single window models.

Rationale

Single-window approaches to service delivery have been undertaken to improve both the way organizations function and to make services more accessible to clients.

From the perspective of the organization, single window approaches have been used primarily to:

- maintain or improve the quality of service delivery with fewer resources (constrained budgets, fewer staff);
- ensure that programs and services do not conflict with each other;
- develop better client feedback mechanisms; and
- improve the effectiveness of particular policies and programs.

Clients have identified single-window service delivery mechanisms as ways:

- Reduce confusion over availability of services;
- Provide seamless delivery of services (weaving together services delivered from different jurisdictional levels);
- Improve access to services and information;
- Improve the level of support they receive; and
- Improve the ability to communicate their needs to government.

Characteristics of Single Window Models

Three of the most common and practical ways of characterizing single window models are by function, structure and linkage relationships.

Function

There are five potential functions performed by single-window models for service delivery.

- Improved access to information;
- Improved access and delivery of existing services;
- Feedback to government on client needs;
- Marketing - to attract additional investment; and
- Supporting the marketing efforts of secondary wood manufacturers.

Structure

There are three common model types - gateways, one-stop shopping and seamless service initiatives.¹¹

Gateways: At the simplest level, many jurisdictions have established gateways which are no more than Internet sites intended to provide information from many different agencies and program areas. Typically, these include information about available incentives, taxes, labour costs and other business costs, resource availability (as an input into the manufacturing business) and transportation and infrastructure information. Another common approach is to provide a toll free information and referral service. The gateway does not typically provide program services but improves the capacity of the client to access such services by providing an information dissemination or referral function.

One-stop shopping provides a physical location where both services and information can be provided. Building on the single-window gateway, one-stop shopping provides not only improved accessibility but also the actual provision of some, if not all, services. Service New Brunswick is an often-mentioned example of one-stop shopping. In BC, the Access Centres established by the Ministry of Employment and Investment represent another example. One-stop shopping approaches are often described as "bricks and mortar" approaches since they depend upon a physical location that the client can visit, in person, to access services.

Seamless Service initiatives provide single window access to services which span multiple jurisdictions or agencies. The model is designed to overcome jurisdictional divisions that may be a stumbling block to effective service delivery. The service has typically been structured to respond to the needs of a particular program area, such as business, or for particular groups of individuals, such as First Nations.

Linkage Relationships

Another way to categorize single window models is by the nature of their linkages between agencies responsible for a service or having an impact on the quality of service delivery and the service provider charged with delivering the service to clients. This aspect of the single window model focuses on delegation of responsibility and partnerships between affected agencies. The level of delegation or service integration is a feature that helps to distinguish one model from another. Some models entail the delegation of functions from one agency to another, while others involve the integration of services between levels of government. Some arrangements can be further categorized according to whether they stand as informal or formal arrangements.

Some of the more typical arrangements are identified below:

Delivered directly by a department or government: the agency responsible for services delivers them directly.

Owner delivered in a co-located environment: agencies deliver their services in the same location (without being integrated).

¹¹ Stephen Bent, Kenneth Kernaghan and D. Brian Marson (March 1999), *Innovations and Good Practices in Single-Window Service*, (prepared for the Citizen-Centred Service Network, Canadian Centre for Management Development).

Shared delivery by several government agencies through service integration: government agencies deliver services in partnership through integration.

Delegated Delivery through a corporate service utility: where an organization which does not have services of its own to deliver is contracted to deliver services on behalf of an agency or one level of government.

Delegated delivery through an intergovernmental service utility: where services of more than one level of government are delivered through an integrated service utility.

Delegated delivery through another service provider ("multiplexing"): where services are delivered for government or for an agency by another service provider through existing or partnered delivery channels.

Variables Affecting the Choice of Single-Window Models

Single-window approaches reviewed in recent studies identify the following variables which affect the choice of model and its ultimate performance

- The quality of relationships between "partnering" agencies;
- Client skills, resources and capacities;
- Service provider skills, resources and capabilities;
- Technological inequities/compatibilities;
- The need to protect individual rights;
- The level of political support or leadership;
- The level of support at lower levels of the partnering agencies;
- The level of support at the senior level within lead and partnering agencies;
- The degree to which the approach is compatible with the existing corporate culture;
- The ability of lead and partnering agencies to commit required funding and staff resources;
and
- The feasibility of meeting political and administrative requirements to "enable" the initiative.

Successful single window initiatives adequately account for these variables and the degree to which they can be removed or changed. This is another way of saying that the model design needs to fit within the institutional landscape and broader operating environment.

Single-Window Service Delivery Matrix

Table 1

| | Owner-Delivered Owner-delivered single-window services delivered directly by a department or government. | Owner-Delivered Single-window services that are owner- delivered in a co- located environment. | Shared Delivery Single-window services delivered by multiple governments or departments in partnership through service integration. | Delegated Delivery Single-window delivery of a range of services from one government through a corporate service utility. | Delegated Delivery Single-window delivery of services from more than one level of governmental service utility (intergovernmental) | Delegated Delivery Services delivery for government or departments by another service provider (multiplexing) |
|--|---|--|---|--|--|--|
| Gateways Improving accessibility through single-window information and referral | <p>Functions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improved access to information; 2. Improved access and delivery of existing services; 3. Feedback on the needs of secondary wood manufacturers and policy and program performance; 4. Marketing - to attract additional investment; and 5. Supporting the marketing efforts of secondary wood manufacturers. | | | | | |
| One-stop Shops Improving convenience and accessibility to a wide range of related and/or unrelated services and information | | | | | | |
| Seamless Services Single-window access to related information, referral and services across jurisdictional lines (either within or between governments) | | | | | | |

Appendix 2: Best Practices

Single window initiatives have garnered increased attention from governments and several studies have identified best practices and lessons that support the decision upon what kind of model to implement. Some of the more significant of these are identified below. The list was distilled from studies conducted on behalf of Canada's Citizen-Centered Service Network, the US General Accounting Office and case studies previously described. "*Turf Tension*" was found to negatively affect the implementation of some initiatives. Often this problem is associated with initiatives which affect inter-governmental administrative relations. In situations where turf tension exists it is important that each partnering agency have a high level of commitment to the initiative. Initial less formal arrangements or smaller, incremental steps have been found to build trust and reduce turf tension in the longer -term.

Technological inequities between partnering agencies may interfere with the ability to integrate or coordinate to the degree envisioned in the initiative. Databases, for example, may be incompatible thereby reducing the effectiveness of the initiative.

Protection of individual rights and privacy issues may mean that some databases and information sources cannot be integrated in support of the single window initiative. However, these issues have typically been of greater concern for initiatives designed to improve the delivery of social services.

Poor definition of mandate can lead to inflated expectations. This can make it difficult to please clients and also to demonstrate performance and accountability.

Operating Strategically requires that sufficient structure and guidance is needed to ensure that the single window model has the capacity to develop a strategic orientation. This is viewed as necessary so that investment can be promoted in ways that promote a broader industrial development strategy for the forest sector.

Improvements in service delivery may lead to an increase in demand that cannot be met or is beyond the limit of what was expected.

A partnership approach will help to ensure that all partners have roughly an equal say in the direction of the initiative. Partnership approaches may pose significant problems with respect to accountability, visibility, and human resource policies.

Client centered culture: A commitment to client-centered service delivery is essential. Past studies warn against implementing single-window approaches where an incompatible organization culture could derail initiatives. The problem becomes more significant as the number of organizations brought together under the model increase. On the other hand the development of an single window approach can itself promote desirable culture change.

Responsiveness: the model needs to be responsive to ensure that investor enquiries and issues are dealt with in a timely fashion.

Flexibility is required so that the model can adapt to cyclical changes in the industry and respond to new market demands. Resource requirements and demands on staff time would be expected to fluctuate in sympathy with broader economic cycles.

Enhancing choice and capacity: The users of the service should be given choices with regard to delivery mechanisms. For example, an Internet-based approach might be more appropriate for some client groups than for others. In cases where the new delivery mechanism itself proves to be a hurdle to access for some, additional resources may be required to help improve the capacity of such disenfranchised groups to use the service.

Gaining and maintaining political support: A high level "Champion" of the initiative will help to ensure success. At the same time, if the initiative integrates services from several different agencies, the champion can inhibit success if they provoke turf struggles.

Lead and collaborate: Support for an initiative at all levels in participating agencies is important. Leadership at all levels is needed both for initiating single windows and for fostering the teamwork and horizontal linkages critical to minimizing turf battles and maximizing synergies. The forestry team approach found in the US southwest emerged from the lower levels of participating agencies. Later they gained the necessary support at the higher levels of each agency.

Plan and pilot: Planning the long-range view of the single-window model is important. Pilot phases are useful to identify implementation problems and program issues whose resolution can ensure more effective implementation of the program once it is out of the pilot phase. In this case, smaller incremental steps may lay a stronger foundation and lead to a stronger initiative in the long-term.

Consultation and networking with key stakeholders is critical to build commitment to the initiative and to identify issues that may have been overlooked. Understanding of the initiative increases both in the agencies implementing the initiative and in the stakeholder groups whose support may be required. This helps to ensure that the initiative responds to the needs of both clients and the partnering agencies. The effectiveness of the model would be undermined if it cannot promote the development of a strong network with partner and stakeholder agencies.

Invest and evaluate: In some initiatives, start-up costs can exceed savings. Although cost-savings are often a goal in implementing single-window initiatives, it is important to examine resourcing needs that will need to be met to ensure that the initiative succeeds. In some cases savings should not be expected immediately. In BC, the BCTIO and supporting agencies in MEI have each faced growing resource constraints. As a result, any new agency faces challenges with respect to promoting forestry investment and acting as a single point of contact.

Partner Strategically: The objectives and power of partners must be roughly equal to ensure success. Partners must also ensure that their objectives are mutually compatible, that they communicate clearly and constantly with one another, that they reconcile differences in their human resource policies, that they make sure that all partners receive an appropriate measure of visibility, and that they build in an allowance for flexibility. The Alabama Forestry Team is effective in part because each agency is able to work more effectively than it could independently.

Leadership: The Alabama Forestry Team consists of state employees with a long history of working together and see department-specific mandates being pursued more effectively through the TEAM approach. This commitment and "fit" with existing mandates ensures that the informal TEAM approach continues to work effectively. Forward Wisconsin reports directly to the State Governor. As a consequence, its high profile in conjunction with its formal structure ensure that incentives are sufficient to ensure follow through.

Credibility with industry: The model cannot work unless it has gained the trust of industry and has credibility with them. This means the existing business community must play an important role in the endeavour. The forestry team approach is predicated on the proposition that the forest products industry needs can be best addressed by forest products professionals. As such, forestry agencies which already have an economic development and wood products focus are the logical "lead agencies" in the team. In the case of the Alabama Forestry Team, the leader works with the Alabama Development Office but is a professional forester. A conscious decision was made in the Alabama case to ensure that forestry professionals were in charge of addressing enquiries and concerns of forest products industries. By comparison, the BCTIO lacks sectoral expertise.

Strive to maintain a single point of contact: To ensure that barriers to information are minimized the single window approach needs to ensure that there is one point of contact. This means that clients are not referred to other agencies and instead the single window serves as the go-between. The Alabama Forestry Team felt that this feature helps them to maintain credibility and responsiveness.

Treat both your "internal" and "external" clients well to ensure that clients do not get referred to other agencies. The Alabama Forestry Team takes a "buck stops here" approach. If they cannot answer a question the team does the legwork then reports back to the client. They do not refer clients to other agencies. The Forestry Team felt that this single point of contact strengthened client relationships and made it easier to provide potential investors with a comprehensive view of a potential investment opportunity. By comparison, some of BC's single window initiatives (BC and MSBTC) tend to adopt the role of a referral mechanism. This means that clients get moved from agency to agency and the relationships between investors and government representative tend to be more difficult to establish.

With regard to the single window models themselves:

Gateways may offer the greatest gains with the least amount of effort. These are services that generally improve access to services but offer little "depth" in the service.

One-stop Services: involve the establishment of a physical presence through an office or such. As a result the costs of implementing such models can be high relative to the gateway approach. The incremental benefits of such an approach relative to lower cost alternatives has to be carefully considered.

Seamless Service Initiatives which provide services from different jurisdictional levels and different agencies within the same jurisdiction provide the most comprehensive improvement in service delivery but pose the greatest number of challenges for building support and implementation., and also the greatest resourcing challenge.

Appendix 3: Assessing Program Delivery Alternatives¹²

| Principles | Key questions and criteria | Single Window Options |
|---|---|-----------------------|
| <i>Public interest</i> | | |
| Fulfilling provincial obligations and interests | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does a program or activity fulfill an essential public policy obligation or interest of the government? (Should the provincial government be in this business?) • Is this role more appropriate for another level of government, or the private or non-government sector? • How will changes affect the responsibilities of other provincial ministries and agencies? • Does the mechanism positively affect the provinces competitiveness and economic efficiency? • How does it affect other provincial objectives? | |
| Providing the capacity for flexible and innovative service delivery | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the change make gov't service delivery more flexible and innovative? • What other benefits, beyond improved service delivery and efficiency, will alternative delivery give the gov't and its partners? | |
| Ensuring appropriate means of control and accountability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will the minister or the government direct and control the program, service or spending? • For what will the minister be accountable, and how? | |
| <i>Service quality and client orientation</i> | | |
| Considering client and stakeholder interests | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have clients and other external stakeholders been asked to share their views? How will they be affected? • Would a change in the method of delivery foster outside business activity or create other positive impacts? | |
| Optimizing service quality and Effectiveness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it promote cooperation among service providers, to clients' advantage? • Will there be provision for client appeal and redress? • Will technology used in service delivery be open and connectible, and provide opportunities to share technical platforms or infrastructure for better client service? | |
| <i>Resource management</i> | | |
| Providing best value for money | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could another level of gov't, or the private or non-government sector achieve satisfactory results, and at what cost? • What are the costs and benefits of delivering the program in an alternative way? • Can the program be financed at least partly through cost recovery and user fees? • What is the most cost-effective way to deliver it? | |
| Designing the most efficient means of delivery | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the cost of in-house delivery compare with alternative means of delivery? • What is the most efficient way to deliver the program, e.g., through a change in delivery methods, by using information technology or by using private-sector capability? • Can the program succeed under commercial conditions (i.e., cost recovery, competition, private-sector delivery?) • Would alternative delivery allow gov't to reduce/avoid costs? | |

¹² Adapted from Dick de Jong (1995), *Framework for Alternative Program Delivery* (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat).

| Principles | Key questions and criteria | Single Window Options |
|--|---|-----------------------|
| <i>Resource management</i> | | |
| Planning for financial viability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must the program or operation be run on a financially self-sufficient basis? If so, how soon must this happen? • What are the financing options for the program? Are they feasible? • Is private-sector financing available to support the activity? • Can the ministry leverage an existing revenue stream? If so, will that put lenders at risk? • Will it be necessary to continue an existing government subsidy? If so, for how long? | |
| Securing the highest return on assets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the value of the assets associated with the current means of delivery, including fixed assets, key personnel, information, supply arrangements and intellectual property? • Will a change in program delivery involve transferring or selling government assets? • Will the Crown get the highest possible return based on the value of the assets, or will the Crown's interests be otherwise protected? | |
| Managing the risks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the risks associated with the shift in delivery methods? • Are the risks acceptable? • How will the organization manage risks? • Is there a contingency plan? • What terms and conditions should govern a shift in delivery methods? | |
| <i>Human Resources</i> | | |
| Managing human resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the implications of new business directions for the department's staff? • Will alternative means of program delivery improve the work environment and productivity of employees? • How will a change in business direction affect human resource requirements and the status of current employees? • How will the organization identify and address employee interests and concerns? • How will it deal with legislative requirements governing human resources and consequent constraints? • What are the workforce adjustment implications of a change in business direction? • Will special measures be required? How will they be financed? • How will the department maintain a high quality work environment, including committed, productive and innovative employees, so that core functions are sustained? | |